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THE WORLD'S BEST NEWS & FACTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

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EARTH DAY 2025

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Making sense of the world

THE WEEK Junior

THE BEST MAGAZINE FOR CURIOUS KIDS

SECRETS OF THE PENGUINS

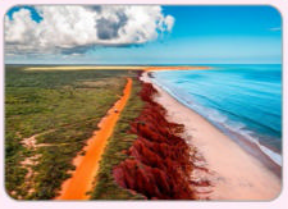
New nature series explores the birds' brave and bold behavior p20

EARTH DAY 2025

BRIGHT START
The first solar panel was created in 1883 by an inventor in New York named Charles Fritts.

Wind turbines generate clean power.

Progress in Australia



Plastic pollution on Australia's coast (shown above) dropped by more than a third to its lowest point in a decade, new research found. There was also a 16% increase in the number of places where there was no plastic debris. Researchers said it was a "heartening step forward" in the fight against waste that harms marine life.

World hits clean energy high

Countries around the world are using more clean energy than they have in about 80 years, according to a new report released on April 8. And, the report found, clean energy will be able to keep up with the growing demand for electricity.

What is clean energy?

Clean energy is a source of electricity that does not release harmful greenhouse gases (gases that trap heat in Earth's atmosphere and warm the planet). Traditional sources of energy, including fossil fuels like oil and coal, do emit greenhouse gases. There are many types of clean energy, including hydropower, which uses water to generate electricity, and solar, which harnesses the Sun's heat to do so. Other sources include wind and a new technology that uses ocean waves. Nuclear power is also considered clean. Created with the use of the natural element uranium, nuclear energy doesn't create greenhouse gases. But mining for uranium does have a higher environmental impact than other types of clean energy.

Phil MacDonald

What is the report?

The sixth annual Global Electricity Review was created by a nonprofit group called Ember, which works to accelerate the world's transition to clean energy. The report analyzed data on the sources of electricity in 215 countries in 2024. Together, 88 of those countries consumed 93% of electricity used worldwide last year. The report also took a close look at the seven nations that use the most power: China, India, the US, the European Union (EU, group of 27 countries), Russia, Japan, and Brazil.

What did the report say?

Ember's report found that last year, more than 40% of the world's electricity was generated by clean power sources for the first time since the 1940s. The largest source of clean energy was hydropower, which generated 14% of electricity in 2024. Next were nuclear (9%), wind (8.1%), and solar (6.9%) power. The boost in clean energy was mostly driven by a 29% increase in solar power, which has doubled in the past three years and was the world's fastest-growing energy source for the 20th straight year. There have also been improvements to batteries that store solar-generated electricity, making the technology more effective. Solar power "is critical in meeting the world's ever-increasing demand for electricity," said Phil MacDonald, head of Ember. The report found that China now accounts for 39% of the world's solar power generation, and the country's use of coal would have been 50% higher without the growth of solar power.

What else did the report say?

Ember reported a 4% growth in the global demand for electricity in 2024, which exceeded the increase in clean energy. This bump was mostly due to long periods of extreme high temperatures around the world. These periods, caused by climate change, increased the use of air conditioners. Other factors that drove demand were electric vehicles and heating systems, as well as artificial intelligence (AI, when a computer imitates human learning), which requires data centers that use vast amounts of electricity. Though the world's three largest power consumers (China, India, and the US) used more clean energy, they also generated slightly more power from fossil fuels in 2024 than in 2023. The EU, the fourth largest, reduced fossil fuel use.

What will happen next?

The report stated that even if electricity demand grows by 4.1% every year until 2030, clean power will keep pace. This is largely because China and India, the world's most populated countries, are continuing to use more solar and other clean energy. As electricity needs expand around the world, the report said, "Clean power is set to grow faster than demand, marking the start of a permanent decline in fossil generation."

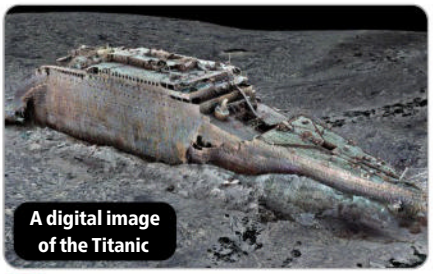
ON THE COVER: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC/BERTIE GREGORY; SPRINGFOX GAMES; DISNEY PLUS; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON THIS PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2); EMBER

Details of Titanic wreck revealed

A highly detailed digital model has helped experts reconstruct the final hours of the Titanic, a luxury passenger ship that sank 113 years ago in the Atlantic Ocean. The 883-foot-long ship was on its first voyage, from England to the US, when it struck an iceberg on April 14, 1912, and sank 12,500 feet to the seafloor.

The 3D computer model of the ship was put together using 715,000 photos and millions of laser measurements of the wreckage taken by remotely operated underwater vehicles in 2022. *National Geographic* called it "the most precise model of the Titanic ever created: a full-scale... digital twin, accurate down to the rivet."

Previously unseen details are visible on the model. These include an open steam valve—which experts said indicates that the ship's engineers tried to keep it running in order to save lives—and hundreds of passengers' personal items. More findings are revealed in the documentary *Titanic: The Digital Resurrection*. Find out more at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-3DTitanic.



A digital image of the Titanic

The original Broadway cast of *Hamilton*

DID YOU KNOW?
To be added to the US National Recording Registry, a recording must be at least 10 years old.

Classic recordings preserved

On April 9, the US Library of Congress said it had added 25 recordings to the National Recording Registry. The selections included the original cast recording of *Hamilton*, the Minecraft soundtrack, Elton John's album *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*, and Mary J. Blige's album *My Life*.

The National Recording Registry is a collection of music, spoken word, or broadcasts that are culturally or historically important. Each year, the National Recording Preservation Board (NRPB, an advisory group to the Library of Congress) adds 25 recordings that spotlight and raise awareness of the range and diversity of American audio heritage. The recordings are permanently preserved for future generations to hear.

This year's entries, announced by Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden, were chosen from more than 2,600 nominations made by the public. "These are the sounds of America—our wide-ranging history and culture," Hayden said in a statement. "The National Recording Registry is our evolving nation's playlist."

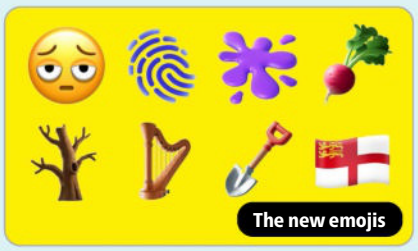
The registry's first selections were added in 2002, and it now includes 675 recordings. Other 2025 additions included Celine Dion's 1997 song "My Heart Will Go On"; a radio broadcast of Game 7 of the 1960 World Series; and Microsoft's reboot chime. Other artists included actors and singers Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, singer-songwriter Tracy Chapman, and Charley Pride, the first Black country music superstar.

Anyone can submit nominations to the NRPB. Listen to this year's additions and learn more about the program at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-NRR2025.

IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

ADDING EMOJIS

There's a new batch of emojis on some smartphones, including a tired-looking face, a purple splotch, a fingerprint, a root vegetable, and a tree without leaves. With the eight added symbols, there are 3,790 emojis overall.



The new emojis

The Duck Boat Pull

PULLING FOR CHARITY

At the first annual Duck Boat Pull competition in Boston, Massachusetts, teams hauled the 21,000-pound vehicles across a public plaza to raise money for youth sports. The event brought the community together and was "so uniquely Boston," said the city's mayor, Michelle Wu.

A BIG CELEBRATION

Cadbury Creme Eggs are a beloved Easter treat, and now the UK candy company has hatched its biggest one yet. The world's largest creme egg weighs 99.2 pounds and stands 3 feet high, which is as tall as an emperor penguin, according to Cadbury. The handcrafted egg is made of real chocolate and gooey fondant filling. "It has been so rewarding to see the vision brought to life," said one of the chocolate artists who made it.

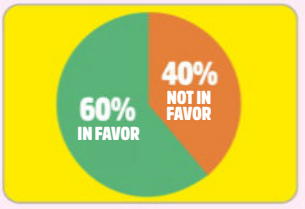
The egg

APPLE; BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION; PA MEDIA; GETTY IMAGES; ATLANTIC PRODUCTIONS/MAGELLAN

FUN FACT
Gray wolves are not always gray. They can have a wide range of coat colors, including shades of tan, brown, black, and even white.

Two of the wolf pups that resemble dire wolves

Bringing extinct animals back



Some people believe that bringing back extinct species is a smart move. Other people are against the plan. In a Big Debate we ran in Issue 249, in January, we asked readers for their opinion. The majority (60%) were in favor of reviving animals that lived long ago, while 40% didn't think it was a good idea.

Version of extinct species revived

On April 7, Colossal Biosciences, a Texas-based company, announced that it had created three wolf pups that resemble the dire wolf, a species that went extinct more than 10,000 years ago. Dire wolves roamed what is now North America and are much larger than gray wolves, their closest living relative today.

What did the company create?

Two of the three pups Colossal created are 6-month-old males, named Romulus and Remus. The female, named Khaleesi, is 2 months old. They have thick, white coats and muscular jaws and are expected to reach 140 pounds in adulthood. They are being raised on a preserve at an undisclosed site of more than 2,000 acres in the northern US with 10 full-time caretakers.

How were the wolves created?

Colossal scientists extracted ancient DNA (chemical that carries all the instructions for how a living thing grows and develops) from two dire wolf fossils. One was a tooth that is about 13,000 years old and the other was an inner ear bone that dates back 72,000 years. The scientists analyzed the DNA to determine which parts of it were specific to a dire wolf and would have given the animal its unique traits. Using that information, the team changed some of the genes (short sections of DNA) of gray wolves to be like dire wolf genes and used them to breed Romulus, Remus, and Khaleesi.

How did people react?

Beth Shapiro, the chief scientific officer at Colossal, described the wolf pups as the first successful case of "de-extinction." US Interior Secretary Doug Burgum called the work a "thrilling new era of scientific wonder." Other people expressed mixed feelings about the project. "It's exciting that we can make functional versions of extinct species," said Adam Boyko, a scientist at Cornell University who was not involved in the project. But the species hasn't truly been brought back to life, he said.

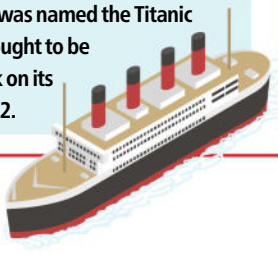
What will happen next?

Colossal said it is seeking to revive other species, including the dodo, a flightless bird from the island of Mauritius that last lived in the late 1600s, and the woolly mammoth, which died out about 4,000 years ago. The company said it's also working to save existing species, such as the endangered red wolf, from going extinct.

WORD OF THE WEEK

TITANIC

In Greek mythology, the Titans were a group of gigantic gods who ruled the Earth. It is thanks to them that we have the word "titanic," which means "of exceptional power or strength." Today, the word is associated with the ship that was named the Titanic because it was thought to be unsinkable. It sank on its first voyage in 1912.



THE WEEK IN HISTORY

April 25, 1901

Car license plates first required

On April 25, 1901, New York became the first state to require that vehicles in the state be registered and display a license plate. These early plates didn't use numbers. Instead, they listed the initials of the car owner. Car owners also had to supply their own plates. They could purchase a license plate kit or make their own, often using metal or leather. By 1910, at least 20 states required license plates.

An early license plate

Historic election in Virginia set

In the governor's race in Virginia, the major-party nominees are both women, which could deliver the state its first female governor. Democrat Abigail Spanberger, a former US lawmaker, will face Republican Winsome Earle-Sears, who is Virginia's lieutenant governor. The current governor, Glenn Youngkin, a Republican, will step down because Virginia allows governors to serve only one term. The election will be held on November 4.

A Chevron sign

Oil company to restore wetlands

Chevron must pay $744.6 million to restore the damage it has caused to coastal wetlands in Louisiana, a jury ruled. The lawsuit (legal dispute) against the oil company was filed by Plaquemines Parish, which claimed Chevron had violated state law by leaving the land contaminated. The case is the first of dozens of lawsuits to reach trial against oil companies for harming Louisiana's environment.

Shelters prep for kitten season

Animal shelters across the US are gearing up for kitten season. About 3.3 million cats, half of which are kittens, will find their way to shelters from now through October. To help animals find homes, some shelters will waive adoption fees and host workshops on fostering. They will also promote the importance of getting pets spayed and neutered to reduce the number of animals in shelters.

Paige Bueckers after being drafted by the Dallas Wings

WINNING STREAK
UConn has had six players be selected as number one overall picks in the WNBA Draft, more than any other college ever.

Players selected in WNBA Draft

At the WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) Draft on April 14, the Dallas Wings had the first pick and selected University of Connecticut (UConn) star Paige Bueckers. The event took place at The Shed at Hudson Yards in New York City and was broadcast on ESPN.

In total, 38 players were drafted. This year's draft comes at an exciting time for the WNBA. The league set records for viewership and attendance last season, and will feature a new team, the Golden State Valkyries, this season.

The draft is held every year so teams can choose players who are entering the WNBA from college or from international basketball leagues. The order in which teams select players is generally determined by their records from the previous season, with the worst teams entering a lottery for a chance to make a top pick.

Bueckers was expected to be chosen first by the Wings. She finished her college career by leading UConn to become the 2025 NCAA champions. A three-time All-American player, Bueckers has the highest scoring average of any UConn women's basketball player, at 19.8 points per game, and the third-most career points.

Two players from Europe were among the top five picks. The Seattle Storm had the second pick, and they selected Dominique Molonga from France. Lithuania's Juste Jocyte was the first-ever draft pick for the Valkyries, who had the fifth pick.

Dominique Molonga of France will play for the Seattle Storm.

The Washington Mystics had the third, fourth, and sixth picks, and they chose Notre Dame guard Sonia Citron, Southern California forward Kiki Iriafen, and Kentucky guard Georgia Amoore respectively.

"Nothing is guaranteed, so for this moment to be here and to actually happen, it's nerve-racking," Bueckers said after being drafted. She described herself as "excited" for her time with the Wings to begin.

The 2025 WNBA season will tip off on May 16.

THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

"309 people don banana hats to break world record" *UPI*

GETTY IMAGES (4); COURTESY ABIGAIL SPANBERGER; UNITED STATES NATIONAL GUARD; AP; ON LEFT PAGE: COLOSSAL BIOSCIENCES/BUSINESS WIRE; LEATHERLICENSEPLATES.COM; GETTY IMAGES

Around the world

A village in Greenland

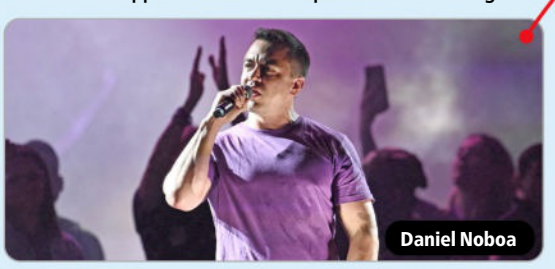
Greenland
First Arctic ambassador named

On April 11, Greenland appointed Kenneth Høegh as its first ever ambassador to the Arctic Council, a group of eight nations that have territory in the northernmost region of Earth. About two thirds of Greenland, an island territory of Denmark, lies within the Arctic Circle. Høegh will represent Denmark as it leads upcoming discussions on topics such as addressing pollution, protecting wildlife, and supporting Arctic communities.

The puppets and puppeteers

Democratic Republic of the Congo
A cross-continent puppet trek

A herd of animal puppets set off on April 9 for a 12,400-mile journey to raise awareness of migration caused by climate change. Over the next four months, The Herds project will travel through Central, West, and North Africa and Europe to the Arctic Circle. Along the way, new puppets will join the troupe to represent local species like vervet monkeys and reindeer, and others will disappear to show the impact of climate change.


Daniel Noboa

Ecuador
Current president re-elected

On April 13, President Daniel Noboa was re-elected as the leader of Ecuador. During his campaign, Noboa said he wanted to crack down on crime and help the economy. The election's first round was in February, but the results were so close that it had to go to a second round. Noboa's opponent, Luisa González, said she will demand that the votes be recounted.

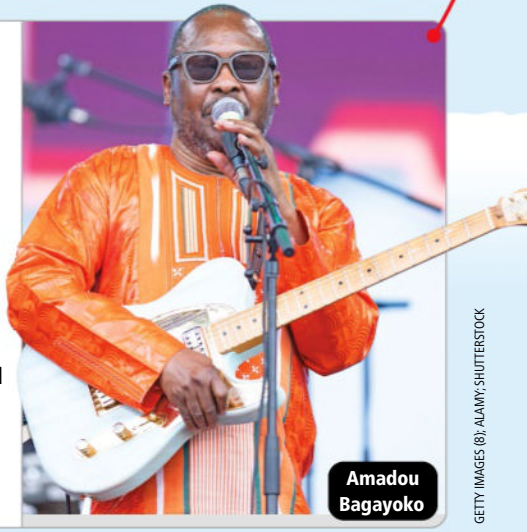
Italy
Nation welcomes UK royalty

King Charles and Queen Camilla of the UK traveled to Italy from April 7–10 to celebrate relations between the countries. On April 9, they met with Pope Francis, the head of the worldwide Catholic Church, in Vatican City. They also visited a school in the capital city of Rome and attended a state dinner with Italian president Sergio Mattarella.

Pope Francis (right) with the royal couple

Bamako, Mali
Famous musician remembered

Thousands of people gathered at a funeral on April 6 for musician Amadou Bagayoko. The guitarist and singer, who was blind, was in a musical duo with his wife, Mariam Doumbia, another blind singer. Known as Amadou and Mariam, the pair sold millions of albums and wrote the official song for the 2006 World Cup in Germany. They also performed at the closing ceremony for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.


Amadou Bagayoko

GETTY IMAGES (8); ALAMY; SHUTTERSTOCK

Around the world

Greece
Workers demand higher pay

Public services halted across Greece on April 9 due to a one-day nationwide workers' strike (refusal to work as a form of protest). Flights were canceled, ferries were held up at ports, and trains and buses were stopped while protesters demonstrated in the capital, Athens. Their demands included higher wages to keep up with the rising cost of living.

Japan
Machine measures fish fattiness

A machine called Sonofai has been invented that can measure how fatty a piece of tuna is in 12 seconds. People tend to prefer fatty fish because it tastes good, but usually it takes a human worker about 60 seconds to assess the fat content of frozen tuna by cutting into it. Sonafai aims ultrasound waves at the fish and measures the waves that bounce back, which are then used to create a diagram showing how fatty the tuna is.

Thailand
Water festival celebrated

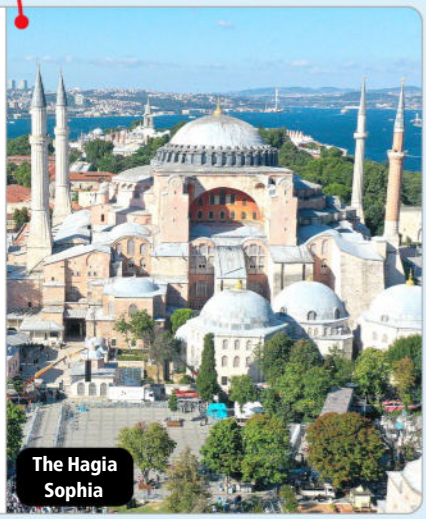
Crowds filled the streets with water fights from April 13–15 during Songkran, one of Thailand's most important celebrations. Thousands of people participate in the festival, which marks the Thai New Year and has roots in ancient traditions. Children and adults visit temples, wash the hands of their elders, and squirt water guns or splash water on one another to symbolize washing away the old year and gaining good fortune in the year to come.

Negros Island, the Philippines
Volcano erupts

On April 8, a volcano called Mount Kanlaon erupted for an hour, blasting a cloud of ash 2.5 miles into the sky. Volcanic activity is very common in the region and the volcano had last erupted in December, so most residents had already moved to safety. Still, officials recommended canceling work and closing schools in areas that could be affected by falling ash.

Istanbul, Turkey
Domes of historic building to be restored

Officials announced on April 13 that a new renovation project is set to begin on the Hagia Sophia. Experts have been working for years to restore the 1,486-year-old mosque (place of worship for Muslims) and protect the structure against earthquakes. In the new phase, lead coverings will be replaced and steel frameworks will be reinforced on the main dome and two half domes. The building will remain open to the public.



EARTH DAY 2025

Should schools require climate lessons?

Some say learning about the environment doesn't have to happen in school.

What you need to know

- **Climate change education helps students learn about the issue's causes, effects, and solutions.**
- **Kids read novels about climate change in English class, do lab experiments in science, and research how people are helping in social studies.**
- **Each state determines the subjects that are taught in its schools.**
- **In 2020, New Jersey became the first state to require climate education in K–12 public schools. Others including New York and California followed.**

LEGAL APPROACH
Around the world, more than 60 climate-related legal cases have been filed on behalf of children and teens.

Young people everywhere are taking action against climate change, whether that's by reducing plastic use, planting trees, cleaning up beaches, or attending protests and contacting their elected officials. There's no doubt that kids are passionate about protecting the planet and want to learn how to help. Many schools include the topic in science, social studies, and other classes, and about 80% of adults feel kids should be taught about the environment in school. Others, however, think lessons about climate change take time away from subjects like math, reading, and writing. What do you think? Should schools require climate lessons?

Yes—knowledge will only help

The younger kids are when they learn about climate change, the sooner they can develop planet-friendly habits. Scientists say those habits add up and over time could have as much of a positive effect on the environment as solar power or electric vehicles. Some people worry that climate change education can make kids feel scared or sad. But many experts say that when young people are informed about the issues, they feel more empowered and inspired to fight for the planet. That will also help kids be better prepared for climate-based careers in the future. There will be many more of those jobs in the coming years.

No—kids have enough to worry about

There are only so many hours in the school day, and kids already have a lot on their plates. Adding another subject could overload them and cause stress. It also wouldn't be fair to teachers, who already have a hard job. In a poll of science teachers, 65% said climate change is outside of their subject area, and 17% said they don't have the materials to teach it. That means they would have to spend time learning about the topic before they could create lessons for kids. Of course learning about climate change is important, but there's a lot of information available online or at the library. Kids can learn about it outside of school.

YES Three reasons schools should require climate lessons

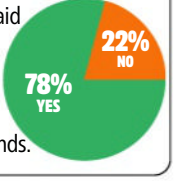
1. **Teaching kids about the environment when they're young will help them develop Earth-friendly habits sooner.**
2. **Learning about climate change reduces worry for kids and helps them feel empowered to help.**
3. **Young people need to learn so they're prepared for climate-related jobs.**

NO Three reasons schools should not require climate lessons

1. **Kids already have enough to worry about in school, and adding another subject could cause stress.**
2. **Climate change lessons would also mean more work for teachers, who would have to learn about the topic in order to teach it.**
3. **Kids who care about climate change can learn all about it on their own time.**

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if people should get time off to care for pets. Your votes were clear: Most of you said yes, animal owners need extra time for their furry friends.



What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote YES if you think schools should require climate lessons or NO if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.

GETTY IMAGES

Taking to the skies

Lieutenant Commander Monica Borza, a former flight surgeon for the elite Blue Angels squadron, appeared in the 2024 documentary *The Blue Angels*. A shortened version is now playing in IMAX theaters nationwide. Borza spoke to *The Week Junior* about her experience.

Where did you grow up?
I grew up in Virginia Beach, a big Navy town. My dad was a naval flight officer, so the military has always been close to my heart and a big part of my decision to join.

When did you first learn about the Blue Angels?
Every summer, the Blue Angels would perform an air show in Virginia Beach. As a kid, I would watch in awe of everything they were doing up there.

The Blue Angels

What is a flight surgeon?
As a flight surgeon, I ensure that pilots are physically and mentally ready to fly. I conduct exams, provide treatment, and fly with them to experience the forces they face. I also trained alongside the pilots to understand their challenges.

What was it like for you being a part of the Blue Angels?
Incredible! The team is more than just pilots. Everyone from the administrative to ground staffs are key to delivering the best show.

How did you feel watching the documentary?
It was amazing to see the team's hard work and dedication on display. It was special to see it from the public's perspective, knowing they were getting an inside look at our mission and daily operations. I hope it inspired someone or brightened their day.

If you could give any advice to young people, what would it be?
If you have a passion, follow it. Don't let anything hold you back, and give it your all.

Lieutenant Commander Monica Borza

FAMOUS FLIERS
The Blue Angels formed in 1946 to bring attention to naval aviation and is made up of 138 members of the US Navy and US Marines.

Setting a race record

At 15 years old, New Zealand athlete Sam Ruthe became the youngest person ever to run a mile in under four minutes (also called a sub-four-minute mile). Ruthe achieved the feat on March 19 at Mt. Smart Stadium in Auckland, New Zealand, with a time of 3 minutes and 58 seconds. He beat the previous record by two seconds. Ruthe, who turned 16 on April 12, told Reuters the moment was made more special by the people who came out to support him. He said, "This was probably my favorite goal that I've reached."

Sam Ruthe

Masaki Kashiwara

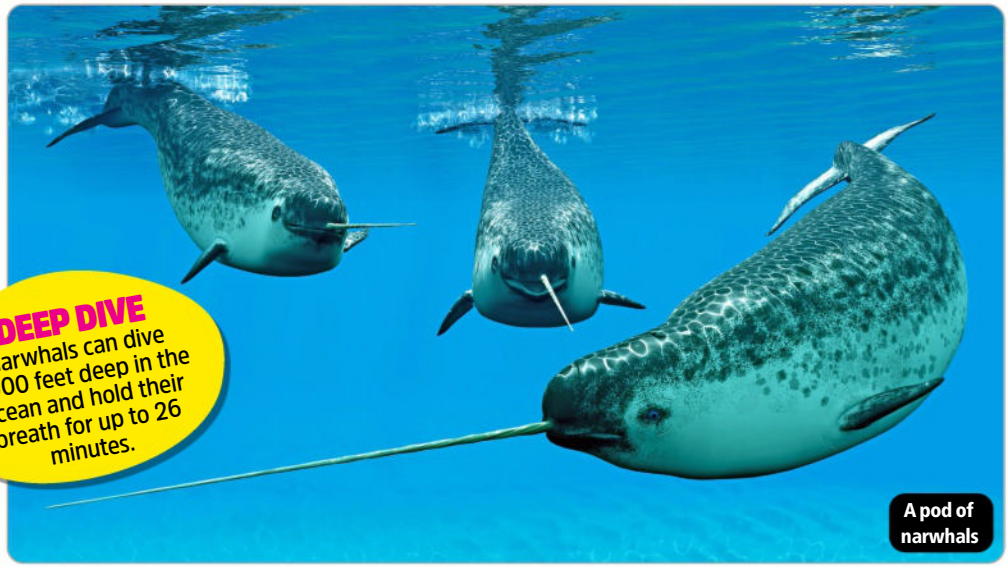
A milestone in math

Japanese mathematician Masaki Kashiwara, age 78, was awarded the Abel Prize, considered the "Nobel Prize of mathematics," by the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters. He is the first person from Japan to receive the honor. Kashiwara, who has been interested in math since childhood, is a professor at Kyoto University. He is being recognized for his work linking different fields of math to solve complex problems and simplify calculations. The chairman of the prize committee praised Kashiwara for "connecting areas that were not known to be connected before."

OVERHEARD

"I saw the challenge before me, and I faced it head-on."
Suni Lee, age 22, a six-time Olympic medalist in artistic gymnastics, on overcoming obstacles after being diagnosed with kidney disease

GETTY IMAGES (3); THE ABEL PRIZE; AMAZON MGM STUDIOS



DEEP DIVE
Narwhals can dive 5,000 feet deep in the ocean and hold their breath for up to 26 minutes.

A pod of narwhals

Marine species found

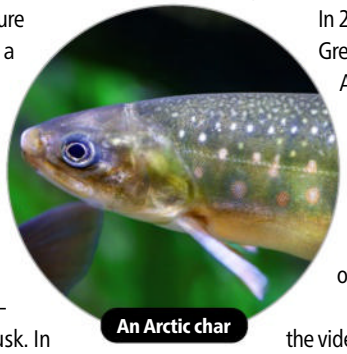
The Ocean Census, the biggest project ever undertaken to discover ocean life, has identified 866 previously unknown species during 10 ocean expeditions since 2023. The new creatures include a guitar-shaped shark, sea snails with venomous teeth, and a coral with eight tentacles.

The snails

A playful use for narwhals' tusks

Narwhals are often called the unicorns of the sea because of the single tusk that sticks out from their heads. But since few people have been able to observe these animals' behavior in the wild, experts have never been sure what the tusk's function is. Now a new study out of Northern Canada has revealed that narwhals may use their tusks in an unusual and playful way.

Narwhals are related to beluga whales and are considered toothed whales, but they have only two teeth—one of which is their famous tusk. In males, the tusk can grow up to 10 feet long. In females, the tooth usually grows into a spiral, not a tusk. Until now, scientists believed narwhals used their tusks mostly for hunting prey and sensing temperature changes in the water. But because the mammals were so hard to spot, there was a lot experts didn't know.



An Arctic char

In 2022, a team of scientists led by Greg O'Corry-Crowe of Florida Atlantic University decided to study narwhals living in the waters of the Canadian High Arctic, a remote, icy area. They flew a drone over Creswell Bay to capture videos of narwhal behavior.

When the researchers watched the videos, they realized that the narwhals wielded their tusks differently depending on the situation. One recording showed three narwhals chasing fish and using their tusks to swat at the prey, similar to swinging a baseball bat. After they were done, the narwhals feasted on the fish. In this instance, the narwhals had used their tusks to stun and eat their prey.

But in another recording, three narwhals used their tusks simply to check out a large Arctic char, prodding the fish in a non-threatening way. This time the whales were more careful, playfully nudging and flipping the fish. In the end, the narwhals did not attack or eat the fish. Instead, they let it swim away.

The results revealed that while narwhals often use their tusks to hunt and attack prey, they can also use them in non-aggressive ways that resemble playing. "Seeing that these animals are not actually hunting the fish but exploring, manipulating, and interacting with it was really a game changer," said O'Corry-Crowe.

PLACE OF THE WEEK

Hallerbos, Belgium

Hallerbos, or the "Blue Forest," is famous for its purple carpet of bluebells that bloom in April and May. Visitors can enjoy the flowers among giant sequoia trees on five walking routes. Despite suffering damage during World War I (1914–18), the forest has regrown and now spreads across more than 1,300 acres. Black woodpeckers carve out hollows in the trees, providing shelter for rare bats. Red foxes, rabbits, pine martens, and badgers also live there, along with a large population of fire salamanders. Curious visitors can spend time at the Forest Museum to learn more.

A fire salamander

MOUSE CHECKUP
Averaging 600 beats per minute, a mouse's heart beats about 10 times faster than a human heart.

Mice are willing to help one another.

Mice give first aid to friends

Humans aren't the only animals that perform first aid for a friend in need, new research has found. In an experiment, researchers put one mouse to sleep and observed how another mouse reacted. They found that the conscious (awake) mouse often became a "helper" and tried to revive its unconscious companion.

The helper usually started by sniffing or grooming the unconscious mouse. In many cases, the helper would then open its companion's mouth and pull on its tongue to try to clear its airways. Actions like these seemed to aid the sleeping mouse's recovery. Researchers even tried placing a plastic ball in the sleeper's mouth and found that the helper mouse usually managed to get the ball out.

Mice were more likely to provide care to a companion they were already familiar with than a stranger they were meeting for the first time. Chimpanzees, dolphins, and elephants have also been seen giving aid to sick or injured companions, and the researchers said that this behavior may be common among social animals.

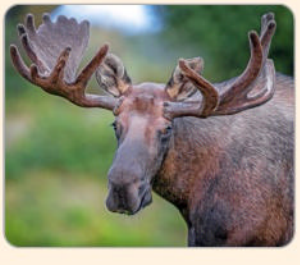
Animal of the week: Emu

A team of researchers found that emus are smart enough to solve tricky problems. Emus were given a task where they had to rotate a wheel so it lined up with a hole to release a reward. Nine out of 10 times the birds turned the wheel the right way.

- **LIFE SPAN:** 5 to 10 years
- **HABITAT:** Woodlands and plains in Australia
- **SIZE:** About 5.7 feet tall
- **DIET:** Flowers, fruits, insects, leaves, and seeds
- **FUN FACT:** Although emus can't fly, they can run up to 30 miles per hour.

Good week / Bad week

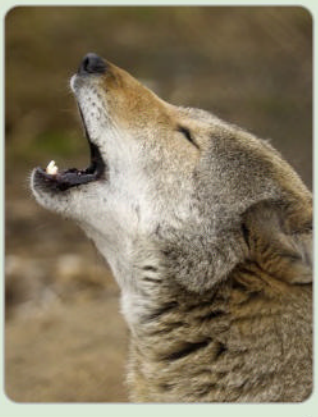
A rare frog
An elusive frog species has been spotted for the first time in more than 130 years. Experts had been searching for Alsodes vittatus since 1893 and feared the species was lost until they discovered two populations in Chile.



Deer, elk, and moose
A deadly condition called chronic wasting disease has been spreading among deer, elk, and moose in 36 US states, parts of Canada and northern Europe, and on farms in South Korea. So far, no cure has been found.

ASK AN EXPERT: "How do wolves communicate with each other?" Sophia, 11, Maryland

Mark Wanner
Animal care expert,
Brookfield Zoo Chicago



Wolves communicate through smell, sound, and body language. Scent marks their territory and creates a "road map" for pack members to follow. Wolves also bark, whine, growl, and howl, but body language, such as ear and tail positions, is most important to help the pack get along.

Do you have a question for an animal expert? Send it to *hello@theweekjunior.com*. Find out more about Brookfield Zoo Chicago at brookfieldzoo.org.

GETTY IMAGES (4); EDVIN RIVEROS; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (4); RICHARD SMITH / THE NIPPON FOUNDATION-NEKTON OCEAN CENSUS

The greatest trophy

Every year one team wins the NHL's top prize—the Stanley Cup.

This spring the best teams in the National Hockey League (NHL) will compete until one is crowned champion and wins the sport's most coveted honor, the Stanley Cup.

Sir Frederick Arthur Stanley

What is the Stanley Cup?

The NHL Stanley Cup playoffs is the annual elimination tournament that takes place at the end of the regular season and determines the league champion. There are 32 teams in the NHL, with 25 in the US and 7 in Canada. The playoffs consist of four rounds of best-of-seven games. (The first team to win four games advances to the next round.) At the end of the tournament, the winner receives the Stanley Cup trophy. It is the oldest trophy that can be won by professional athletes in North America. The original Stanley Cup trophy was donated in 1892 by Sir Frederick Arthur Stanley, then Governor General of Canada, to be awarded to the best amateur hockey team in the Dominion of Canada (the country's formal title used at the time).

History of the Stanley Cup

The first Stanley Cup was awarded in 1893 to the Montreal Hockey Club. In 1907, the Montreal Wanderers were the first champions to have each player's name engraved on the Cup, which later became an annual tradition for the winning team. The National Hockey Association (NHA, precursor to the NHL) began competing for the Stanley Cup in 1910. In 1917, the NHL was formed. From 1918 to 1925, the playoffs consisted of teams from several hockey leagues in North America, including the NHL. By 1926, however, the other leagues had shut down, except one–the NHL. From then on, the Stanley Cup became the NHL's exclusive championship prize.

The Stanley Cup

GETTY IMAGES

GRAND PRIZE
The Stanley Cup trophy, a silver bowl on top of multiple tiers, is 32.25 inches tall and weighs 34.5 pounds.

Memorable moments

A record streak

The Montreal Canadiens, the oldest continuously operating professional hockey team, won their fifth straight Stanley Cup in 1960 (right)—a record for consecutive Cups that still stands.

A flying goal

Bobby Orr, considered one of the greatest hockey players of all time, scored a dramatic overtime goal called "Orr's flying goal" (right) in 1970 to lead the Boston Bruins to a win over the St. Louis Blues in the Stanley Cup finals. His game-winning goal clinched the team's first championship in 29 years.

in ice hockey

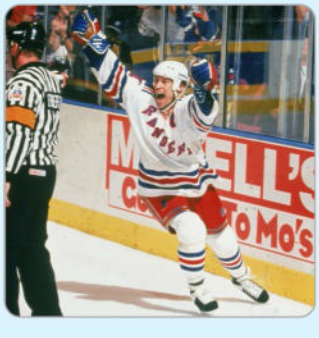
BREAKING BARRIERS
In 1955, Marguerite Norris, the president of the Detroit Red Wings, became the first woman to have her name inscribed on the Stanley Cup.

HOCKEY HISTORY
From 1942 until 1967, the NHL consisted of six teams that are still referred to as the "Original Six."

The Florida Panthers with the Stanley Cup after their 2024 victory over the Edmonton Oilers

An inspiring promise

In 1994, the New York Rangers had not won a Stanley Cup since 1940, one of the longest championship droughts in history. Earlier in the playoffs, captain Mark Messier (right) promised a win, inspiring the team. The Rangers went on to the Cup finals, defeating the Vancouver Canucks in Game 7 to claim victory.



Calgary Flames fans

Pathway to the finals

There are 82 games in an NHL season, and the league has two conferences, Eastern and Western. Each conference is split into two divisions. The Eastern conference has Atlantic and Metropolitan divisions, while the Western conference has Central and Pacific divisions. Sixteen teams (out of 32) make the playoffs. The top three teams in each division qualify automatically, making up the first 12 of the 16 spots in the playoffs. The remaining four spots, called wild cards, go to the next two highest-ranked teams in each conference. Each round in the playoffs is a best-of-seven series. The team that makes it through all four rounds wins the Stanley Cup trophy.

The Dallas Stars celebrate a goal.

The 2025 playoffs

In 2024, the Florida Panthers won the Eastern Conference championship, then defeated the Edmonton Oilers of the Western Conference, 4–3, to win the Stanley Cup. It was the Panthers' first championship victory in the team's 30-year history. In the current 2024–2025 NHL season, the Dallas Stars and Florida Panthers are the favorites to take home the Stanley Cup. The NHL regular season will end on April 17, and the playoffs are scheduled to start on April 19. The Stanley Cup finals will begin in June. The team with the better regular-season record gets the home-ice advantage in each playoff round.

FUN FACT
The green iguana can grow up to 7 feet long, while the spiny-tailed iguana can measure as small as 4.9 inches long.

A modern iguana from Fiji

Iguanas took prehistoric journey

About 34 million years ago, a group of iguanas made the longest-known ocean journey of any land animal, according to a new study. Researchers said the creatures traveled nearly 5,000 miles from the western coast of North America and across the Pacific Ocean. They landed on an isolated group of islands in the South Pacific ocean called Fiji. The study's findings solve the mystery of how the lizards got to this remote location, where they still live today.

The iguanas that currently live in Fiji are the only ones that exist outside of North or South America or the Caribbean. Scientists have known for many years that the iguanas had to have come from somewhere else, but they have been puzzled over where. One common theory was that iguanas that lived in South America traveled to Fiji. Scientists didn't think it was possible that the iguanas could have come from North America, which is farther away.

An island in Fiji

For the new study, the researchers examined the DNA (chemical that carries all the information about a living thing) of several living iguana species, including some from Fiji. The DNA indicated that the island iguanas were not related to iguanas from South America. The scientists were surprised to find, however, that the Fiji iguanas were related to desert iguanas from North America. This meant the lizards had to have taken the long voyage. "That they reached Fiji directly from North America seems crazy," said Jimmy McGuire, a co-author of the study and a biologist at the University of California, Berkeley.

The scientists concluded that the Fiji iguanas split off from their North American relatives about 34 million years ago. The lizards likely made the trip on "rafts" made of vegetation. "You could imagine some kind of cyclone knocking over trees where there were a bunch of iguanas and maybe their eggs, and then they caught the ocean currents and rafted over," said Simon Scarpetta, a co-author of the study and scientist at the University of San Francisco.

Desert iguanas can go a long time without food or water, which would have made them very well-suited to the extended trip. "If there had to be any group of...lizard that really could make [a 5,000-mile] journey across the Pacific on a mass of vegetation, a desert iguana–like ancestor would be the one," Scarpetta said.

Ancient traveling cats

One of the first cats in Chinese art

Cats were beloved pets in ancient China, but scientists have never been sure how the animals first got there. A new study found that cats were brought to the country about 1,400 years ago by traders and officials traveling on the Silk Road. This historic trading route connected China with countries to the west.

Scientists studied the DNA of housecats that lived in China long ago and found that they were related to cats that lived in Central Asia and Eastern Europe. The researchers concluded that early pet cats were likely carried from those places in cages as gifts for Chinese leaders. DNA indicated that the oldest cat the team studied was all or mostly white. "That would have made it a fancy, exotic pet," said the study's lead author, Shu-Jin Luo.

Dancing found to boost your well-being

Dancing is fun and, a new study confirmed, can also reduce stress levels and improve overall health.

Many studies have been done on the positive effects of dancing. It has even been called a "stress vaccine," and a team of researchers wanted to figure out why. To do so, they reviewed studies of dancing conducted by scientists in different fields, including psychology (study of the mind and behavior), neurobiology (study of the nervous system), and anthropology (study of human history and culture).

AGE-OLD MOVES
Dance was depicted in cave paintings about 10,000 years ago and in written records about 4,000 years ago.

The team determined that dancing has a positive effect because it includes rhythm, music, movement, and social bonding. The combination of music, rhythm, and dancing is better at calming people's nerves than music alone, because they are more actively engaged in the activity. Dancing along with a partner or a group is common in many cultures and can help foster a sense of connection and unity, the scientists found. That in turn releases happy hormones (chemicals that occur naturally in the body) like oxytocin and endorphins and makes people feel emotionally stronger.

"Encouraging people to move together can create a sense of belonging and support while enhancing their ability to cope with stress," Jonathan Skinner, a co-author of the study, said in a statement. He and the other researchers recommend that people include dance in their weekly schedules.

People's moods can improve when they dance.

Lego tires come with many different sets.

Lego tires use recycled material

Lego manufactures about 400 million tiny tires every year. Now the Danish company has announced that many of those tires will be made with about 30% recycled material.

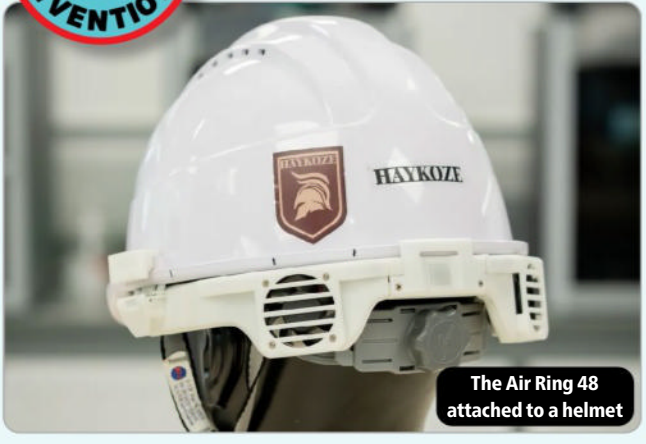
The new material, known as rSEBS, is made from a combination of discarded ropes, fishing nets, and recycled engine oil. Tires made with rSEBS have already been rolled out in some current Lego sets. By the end of 2025, they will be featured in about 120 different sets.

The move is part of Lego's larger plan to make all its products, including bricks, more environmentally friendly by 2032. Lego has pledged to reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases (gases that trap heat in Earth's atmosphere) by 37% by 2032.

"The tires are just one of many options we're working on to make our products more sustainable," said Annette Stube, the company's chief sustainability officer.

AMAZING INVENTION

A device that keeps workers cool



The Air Ring 48 attached to a helmet

People working outdoors in hot weather can face serious medical issues, including heat exhaustion. Two architecture students in Hong Kong—where summers are hot and very humid—designed the Air Ring 48 to attach to construction helmets to keep workers cool.

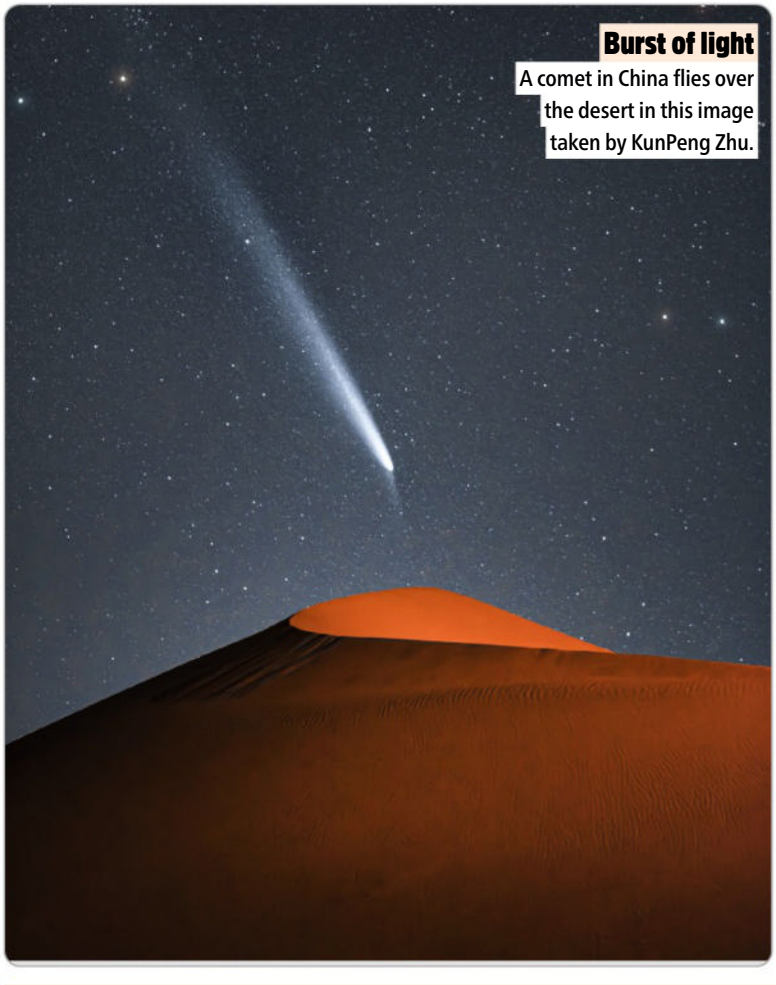
Two fans sit behind the wearer's ears and blow air on their head and neck. This reduces skin temperature by up to 5.76° F and body temperature by 1.21° F. Air Ring 48, which is still being tested, is whisper-quiet, weighs about 5 ounces, and runs for 17 hours.

GETTY IMAGES; THE LEGO GROUP; AIR RING 48; ON LEFT PAGE: HUNAN MUSEUM COLLECTION DATABASE; GETTY IMAGES (2)

Photos of the week

2025 SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY LANDSCAPE AWARDS FINALISTS

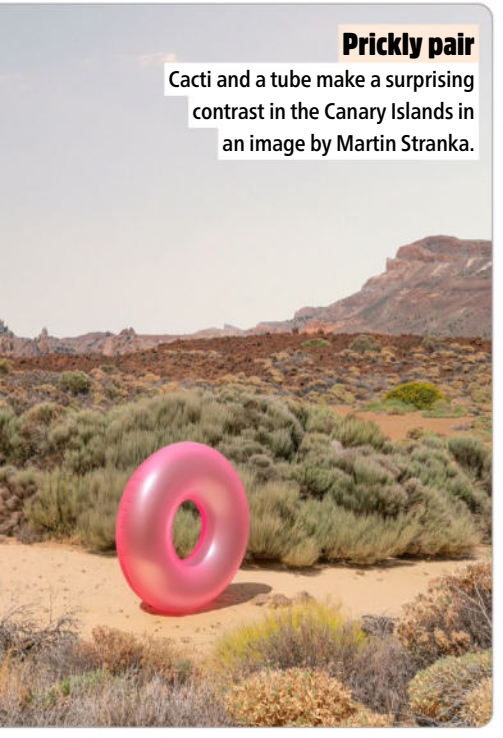
Natural wonder
Xiaoying Shi used a drone to take this photograph of land formations in Utah.



Burst of light
A comet in China flies over the desert in this image taken by KunPeng Zhu.

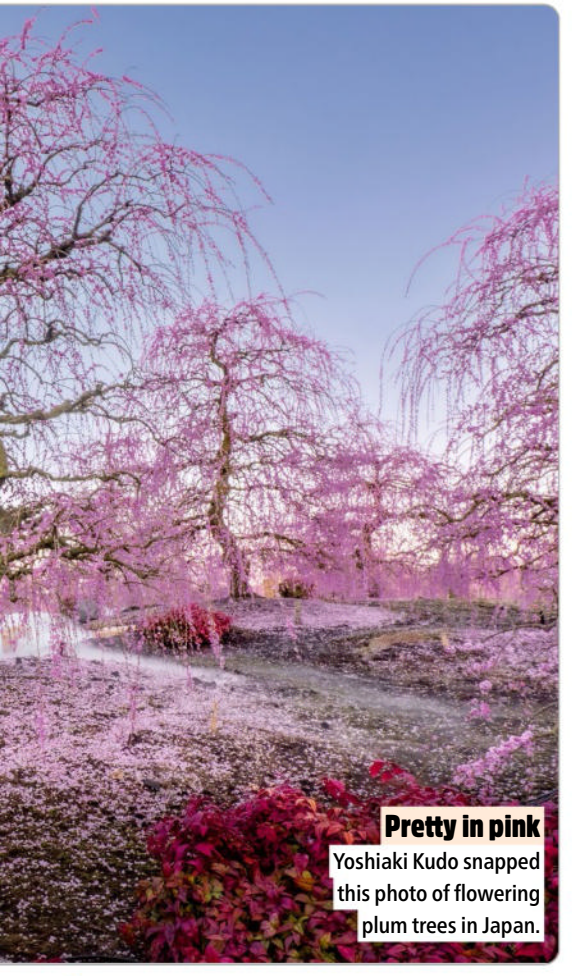
KUNPENG ZHU; YOSHIAKI KUDO; MARTIN STRANKA; FRANCISCO NEGRONI; ZHU YANG; XIAOYING SHI

Photos of the week



Prickly pair
Cacti and a tube make a surprising contrast in the Canary Islands in an image by Martin Stranka.

Perfect storm
Francisco Negroni took this dramatic shot of a volcano in Chile.



Pretty in pink
Yoshiaki Kudo snapped this photo of flowering plum trees in Japan.

Misty morning
In France, Zhu Yang captured this picture of Mont Saint-Michel at dawn.

Kawhi Leonard of the LA Clippers (left) and Jimmy Butler of the Golden State Warriors on April 13

COURT TIME
The NBA regular season features a total of 1,230 games.

Celebrity doll unveiled

Mattel, the maker of Barbie dolls, has launched a line of "Kenbassador" dolls. LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers is the first pro athlete to be turned into one. The doll (at right) is styled to look like James off the court and is an inch taller than other Ken dolls.

NBA teams head into playoffs

The 2024–2025 NBA (National Basketball Association) regular season ended on April 13. Several teams in the Western Conference entered the last day of games with equal or very close records, making their final games important in determining their playoff seeding (ranking). Out of the 20 teams that made the postseason this year, five have never won a championship.

In the Eastern Conference, the Cleveland Cavaliers are the top seed after finishing the season with a 64–18 record. It is the first time the Cavs earned the number one spot since 2016. The Boston Celtics, who are the reigning NBA champions, finished with 61 wins and will be the number two seed in the East. They will be trying to become the first back-to-back NBA champions since 2018. The New York Knicks are the third seed.

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander

In the West, the Oklahoma City Thunder finished as the top team. They had 68 wins, which was not only more than any NBA team this season, but also the best record in Thunder history. The team's star point guard, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, averaged 32.7 points per game, the most of any player this season. The number two team in the West is the Houston Rockets, who finished with a 52–30 record. Just two years ago, they ended the season with only 22 wins. The Los Angeles Clippers, Lakers, and Denver Nuggets all finished with 50–32 records, but due to tiebreakers, the Lakers earned the third seed.

In the playoffs, eight teams from each conference compete in the first round. The top six seeds automatically make it, but the seventh through 10th seeds must first compete in a play-in tournament to earn the last two first round spots.

One big matchup on April 13 was between the Los Angeles Clippers, who were 49–32, and the Golden State Warriors, who were 48–33. The Clippers won in overtime, 124–119, dropping Golden State to seventh place and forcing them into the play-in tournament. That competition was set to run from April 15 through April 18.

The first round of the playoffs was scheduled to begin on April 19. Game 1 of the NBA Finals will take place on June 5.

THIS WEEK'S WINNERS...

GOLF

On April 13, Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland won The Masters, one of the four major tournaments in men's golf. He defeated England's Justin Rose in a sudden death playoff to clinch the tournament and its signature green jacket. McIlroy is now one of six golfers who have won all four majors, known as a career Grand Slam. This was his 17th time playing at The Masters and his first major win since 2014.

Rory McIlroy

VOLLEYBALL

The inaugural League One Volleyball season ended on April 13. Fifth-seeded (ranked) LOVB Austin won the championship title after beating sixth-seeded LOVB Omaha in the final.

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

The San Diego Padres beat the Colorado Rockies, 6–0, on April 13 to complete a three-game series in which the Rockies scored no runs, a result known as a shutout. The win brought the Padres' home record to 10–0, with six shutouts.

GOING FOR GOLD
The 2028 Summer Olympics will have a record 351 medal events, 22 more than the 2024 Games.

Team USA's Emily Fox at the Paris Olympics last summer

Changes coming to 2028 Olympics

On April 9, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced it has changed the number of teams, athletes, and events that will be part of the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, California (LA28). One goal of the decision was to make the Games more equal for men and women. Out of the 10,500 athletes participating in the core Olympic sports at LA28, 5,333 will be female and 5,167 will be male.

LA28 will feature 161 women's events, 165 men's events, and 25 mixed events, and all team sports will have at least the same number of women's teams as men's teams. Women's and men's 3x3 basketball will expand from eight to 12 teams, and in soccer, the number of women's teams is increasing from 12 to 16. FIFA (the global governing body for soccer) called it a "historic step" for women's soccer. The number of men's teams, however, is being reduced from 16 to 12. In the pool, women's water polo will grow from 10 to 12 teams, matching the number in the men's competition for the first time.

Several sports are adding more opportunities for both male and female athletes to earn medals. For example, swimming will now include new 50m events in backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly. Mixed-gender events are being added to track and field, archery, golf, table tennis, and the rowing coastal beach sprint. There will also be a mixed-team competition in gymnastics.

The LA28 program will bring back baseball, softball, cricket, and lacrosse, which have been part of previous Olympics. Two new sports—flag football and squash—will also debut there.

COACH OF THE WEEK

Coach's Name: **Tarek Ayad**

Team: **Elite Fencing Club**

"Coach Tarek is the best coach I could hope for! He is highly positive, funny, and enthusiastic. If kids don't hear the drill, he always patiently explains it again. If we can't get it right, he tells us to keep trying and makes funny faces. When we get hurt, he makes us laugh and want to keep fencing! He is such a supportive coach and has been making a big impact in my life, not just in fencing. I feel so lucky to have him." Ellie, 10, California

To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to *hello@theweekjunior.com.* Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.

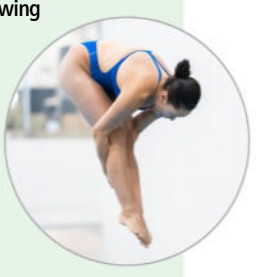
SPOTLIGHT ON...

Marialis Kwak

AGE: 21 SPORT: DIVING
TEAM: UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

Big change I tried diving a little bit in a summer program when I was young, but I was doing gymnastics full-time until eighth grade, when I got injured and quit. I needed something else to do, and diving seemed like the perfect transition. I already knew how to flip.

Inspiring athletes Growing up, I looked up to the Team USA gymnasts that included Gabby Douglas, Jordyn Wieber, and McKayla Maroney. Lately, rugby star Ilona Maher has become a personal role model in sports.



Training plan We practice 20 hours a week through our whole season. Most of that time is spent in the pool. We also lift weights three times a week and have two-hour dry-land practice twice a week. We'll use a trampoline for spatial awareness.

Pre-dive prep I start with a power pose, standing with my hands on my hips and taking up space. It helps you feel strong. To get my heart rate down and calm myself, I've been working on a breathing technique. I'll do a slow inhale for four counts through my nose, then exhale through my mouth. I keep doing it until I feel like I'm locked in.

Making a splash This past season, I went undefeated in our conference, which is pretty cool. Now I'm pretty much retired. I'm a senior and there's not a ton of professional diving that goes on.

Her advice If you have an interest in or a passion for something, try it. Worse comes to worst, you hate it. And if your mom forces you into something, try that too, in case you like it.

GETTY IMAGES; SUNY BUFFALO ATHLETICS (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3); MATTEL

EARTH DAY 2025

WOW! A type of penguin that lived more than 50 million years ago was more than three times heavier than the biggest ones today.

Gentoo penguins in *Secrets of the Penguins*

Inside the world of penguins

The beloved animals' amazing behaviors and survival skills are highlighted in a new documentary series.

A new three-part documentary series is shining a spotlight on some of the world's most incredible animals. *Secrets of the Penguins* follows several species of the flightless birds and reveals how they live and interact. The series arrives on Disney+ and Hulu on April 21. The first part will also air on Disney Channel on Earth Day, April 22, at 8 p.m. ET.

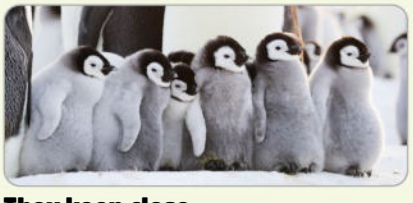
The series was filmed over two years by a team that had more than 70 scientists and filmmakers. They visited places such as Namibia, the Galápagos Islands, and Antarctica. One expert was National Geographic Explorer and penguin scientist Dr. Pablo Borboroglu. He told *The Week Junior* that penguins are "funny," "charismatic," and "mysterious," and he thinks humans love them because they are relatable. "They walk upright, look well-dressed, have a partner, and take care of chicks," Borboroglu said.

Dr. Pablo Borboroglu

The show includes footage of several penguin behaviors that were filmed for the first time, including an emperor penguin couple using a snowball to practice quickly transferring an egg from one to the other. Another is a rockhopper penguin finding a mate with a macaroni penguin and becoming parents to rare, healthy "rockaroni" chicks. "I've never seen something like that," Borboroglu said.

As penguins evolved over millions of years, they were able to adapt to different environments and "conquer the planet," Borboroglu said. But today, they have the lowest adaptation speed of any bird, and climate change could make it harder for penguins in the future. Borboroglu said a goal of the show is to help people become sensitive to penguins, "support conservation, and do whatever they can for the oceans and for the planet."

3 fun penguin facts

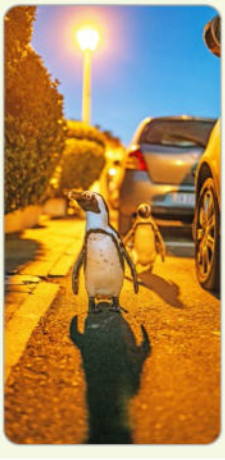


They keep close

Emperor penguins chicks (shown above) in Antarctica will stand together in a group called a crèche to keep themselves safe and warm. Adults create large huddles and generate so much heat that the center can reach 99 degrees.

They may live in towns

Simon's Town, South Africa, is home to a colony of African penguins. Many make their nests on the beach, but some of them choose people's gardens. The birds can often be found waddling through the town's streets (shown at right).



They explore

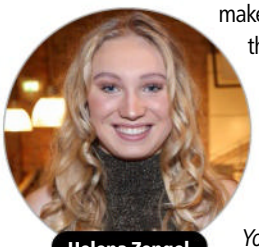
When Magellanic penguins (right) are juveniles they spend time exploring. There is now a colony of them in El Pedral, Argentina, that was likely created by a small group of juveniles that traveled hundreds of miles from their home.

DID YOU KNOW?
On the Spanish island of La Gomera, locals communicate across distances using a whistling language.

A new fantasy adventure film

The Legend of Ochi is a new movie about a girl on a mission to help one of the mysterious forest creatures she had been raised to fear. The fantasy adventure was just released in theaters.

Ochi is set in a village on the fictional island of Carpathia, where shy Yuri, played by Helena Zengel, age 16, lives with her father. The ochi are monkey-like creatures that roam the mountain forests at night and eat farmers' sheep. Yuri's father leads her and a group of boys on outings to find and kill ochi, but when Yuri discovers a wounded baby one by itself, she sneaks off to reunite it with its family.


Helena Zengel

The ochi's look was inspired by real animals, including golden snub-nosed monkeys from China. The adults were portrayed by actors in costumes, and the baby was brought to life through puppetry and special effects. "I used to think I could talk to my stuffed animals, so this was like a dream come true," Zengel told *The Week Junior*.

Ochi communicate with a singing language. The film's writer-director, Isaiah Saxon, hired Paul Manalatos, a man who whistles using the back of his throat, to make their sounds. His vocalizations make up 90% of the calls in the film, and the rest are mockingbirds and ravens.

To prepare for her role, Zengel watched films about young people who have close relationships with magical creatures, such as *E.T.*, *Gremlins*, and *How to Train Your Dragon*. The actress has grown up with horses and said she connects deeply with animals. That helped her understand the trust between Yuri and the ochi, and they model a valuable lesson: "You don't have to speak someone's language to like them, show empathy, offer love, or help each other," Zengel said.

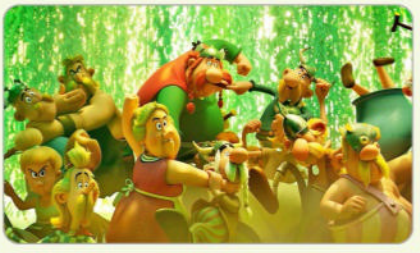
READER RECOMMENDS

Find Me in Paris *(Netflix, Disney+, or Hulu)*
"This show follows Lena Grisky, a Russian princess and ballerina from 1905. After her boyfriend, Henri, gives her a magical timepiece, she accidentally time-travels to 2018. She ends up in France at the modern version of the school she attended in the past, the Paris Opera Ballet School. She befriends several fellow students and must keep her identity a secret while trying to fit in and figure out how to return to her own time. She also has to escape the dangerous Time Collectors who are after her. This is my absolute favorite show!" Zoe, 11, Arkansas.

Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST

Jane
(Apple TV+)
The series inspired by famous conservationist Jane Goodall is back for season three. Young environmentalist Jane and her friends David and Greybeard the chimp go on more imaginary quests to save endangered animals, and Goodall herself even makes a special appearance.

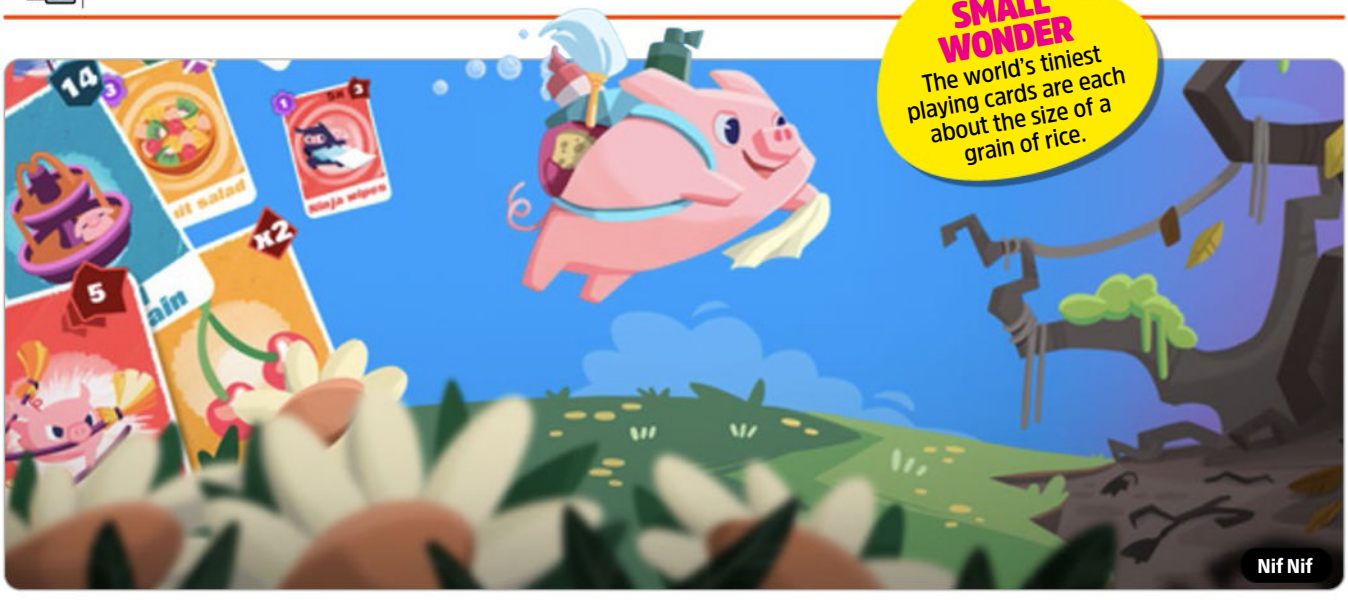


Asterix & Obelix: The Big Fight
(Netflix)
This French animated series (dubbed in English) is based on popular comics and set in 50 BCE. The Roman emperor wants to conquer Asterix and Obelix's village, so they take a magic potion for strength. When the potion master loses his memory, the villagers must fend for themselves.

Night of the Zoopocalypse
(Rent or buy on all major platforms)
In this new animated horror-comedy, a meteor crashes into Colepepper Zoo and releases a virus that turns the animals into zombies. Gracie, a teen wolf, teams up with grumpy mountain lion Dan to lead a group of wacky survivors as they escape and try to rescue the zoo.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC (4); GETTY IMAGES; ALAMY (2); APPLE TV; NETFLIX; VIVA PICTURES; HULU

SMALL WONDER
The world's tiniest playing cards are each about the size of a grain of rice.



Help a pig clean his forest home

Nif Nif is a new, colorful, family-friendly deck-building game. It was recently released for the PC, and a Nintendo Switch version is expected soon.

In a deck-building video game, players collect cards that represent powers and properties. They use them to fight, gain skills, and advance in the adventure. Nif Nif is also a roguelike game, which means the way things unfold changes each time you play.

The idea to create Nif Nif came from its game director, Masha Mallett. She has a son with autism (a developmental disorder often characterized by challenges with social skills and communication), and wanted to create a game that he—and everyone else—could enjoy that emphasized kindness and wasn't violent or overstimulating.

In the game, Nif Nif is a cheerful pig who discovers his forest has been covered in sticky goo. It isn't such bad news, though, because Nif Nif loves to clean. Playing as the pig or his grumpy-looking friend Cat, you have to put together a deck of cards that feature items such as tissues, a bucket, or a shower. You use them as you face creatures that you have to clean—the trick is to do it before they put goo on your character. At the end of each level, your character faces a toxic monster.

Some cards can give your pig or cat powers, and so can dressing them up in special hats. As you move through the forest, you'll find seeds that can be used to grow vegetables. When they're ready, you can turn them into soups that will give you additional power boosts.

PODCAST OF THE WEEK

SPECTACULAR SPECIMENS

Available on all major platforms

This series is made in collaboration with the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture in Seattle, Washington. In each episode, the hosts find out about amazing animal discoveries, including the way bats navigate with their ears and how Baird's beaked whales survive deep in the ocean.

GAME OF THE WEEK

HERO SIMULATOR: WHO WAS?

Roblox

The popular *Who Was?* books are biographies about famous people. In this spin-off game, you follow avatars of artist Frida Kahlo, scientist Albert Einstein, and baseball player Jackie Robinson through a clue-filled house and piece together stories from their lives.

VIDEO OF THE WEEK

SNAKE "SWIMS" LIKE A DUNE SANDWORM

tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Sandworm

In the *Dune* films, giant sandworms burrow in planet Arrakis' desert. Those sci-fi creatures share a trait with a tiny real-world snake: the Kenyan sand boa. This video explains how the reptile hides in sand to ambush its prey and predators.

SPRINGFOX GAMES (2); KUOW NEWS AND INFORMATION; ROBLOX CORPORATION; MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

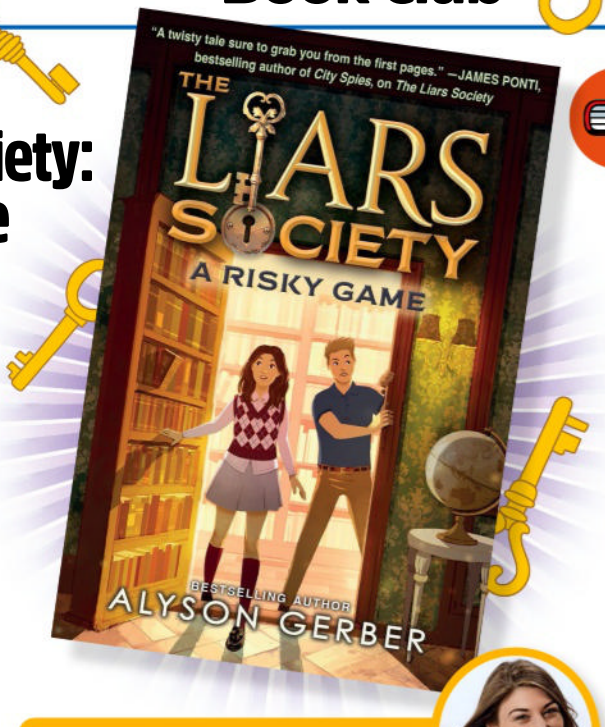
BOOK OF THE WEEK

The Liars Society: A Risky Game

By Alyson Gerber

(Scholastic Press)

Weatherby and Jack are cousins who are chosen to compete for membership in The Last Heir, a secret club at their prep school in Boston. They both want to win because they have family secrets they're trying to protect. On their first challenge, Weatherby and Jack decode a message that directs them to go to the boathouse. Next, they receive a poem that instructs them to enter a hidden room inside a phone booth. The room has a latch on the floor, which opens up to a tomb. They each have to enter and exit the tomb to solve a puzzle. Weatherby gets temporarily stuck inside the tomb, but she is still able to figure out the puzzle. As another challenge takes them to a secret bunker, the cousins realize that someone is trying to murder Weatherby. With the stakes higher than ever, they are in a race against time to survive and don't know who to trust. The puzzle-packed chapters alternate between the perspectives of Weatherby and Jack, giving you insight into both characters. If you enjoyed *Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library*, try this book, which is the second in a series.


"A twisty tale sure to grab you from the first pages." —JAMES PONTI, bestselling author of City Spies, on The Liars Society
THE LIARS SOCIETY
A RISKY GAME
BESTSELLING AUTHOR
ALYSON GERBER

ASK THE AUTHOR

Alyson Gerber

We spoke to the author of the Book of the Week.

What inspired this series?
School was difficult for me, and I was a reluctant reader, so I wanted to write a series that was engaging and would convince any child that reading can be fun.

Who inspired Jack and Weatherby?
I grew up near a boarding school, and Jack was inspired by the intrigue I felt about the students who lived there. He is the ultimate insider, and Weatherby is the outsider.

Why do you like writing middle-grade books?
Middle-grade readers are smart and notice everything.

What do you hope readers take away from the story?
I want them to think about what their truth is and find someone who listens to them.

Did you grow up with cousins?
Yes, it's a special relationship. I wanted to write about the magic of having cousins.

4 books for Earth Day

EARTH DAY 2025

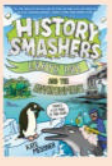
These new titles will inspire you to learn more about helping the planet.

Climate Is Just the Start

By Mikaela Loach

(Bright Matter Books)

Before the author's family moved to the UK, Loach lived in Jamaica and had a favorite beach. When she returned to Jamaica during the pandemic, she saw the beach had almost disappeared. In the book, Loach explains climate change and offers solutions for helping the Earth. *Ages 8 and up*



History Smashers: Earth Day and the Environment

By Kate Messner

(Random House Books for Young Readers)

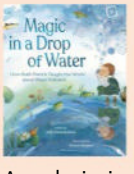
This History Smashers book traces the origin of Earth Day. The first Earth Day took place in 1970, but people have been working to protect the planet for hundreds of years. For example, Founding Father Benjamin Franklin was interested in conservation. *Ages 8–12*

A Kid's Guide to Backyard Trees

By Felicia Brower, illustrated by Nicole LaRue

(Gibbs Smith)

This book will help you figure out what kind of trees you have in your neighborhood. It explains what to look for on a tree's leaves and trunk to match it to one of the dozens of trees in the book. For each species, you'll find out about its size, habitat, and more. *Ages 7 and up*

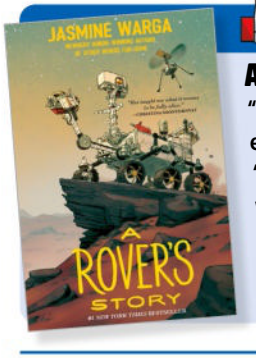


Magic in a Drop of Water

By Julie Winterbottom, illustrated by Susan Reagan

(Rocky Pond Books)

Award-winning ecologist Ruth Patrick (1907–2013) discovered a way to measure pollution in rivers that's now used to conserve forests and oceans. This picture book explains her method and accomplishments. It also includes a timeline of her life. *Ages 7–10*



COURTESY THE PUBLISHERS

READER RECOMMENDS

A Rover's Story *By Jasmine Warga*

"This book is about a rover named Resilience who feels human emotions. He goes to Mars with his drone, Fly, who likes to sing 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.' A sixth-grade girl named Sophie writes letters to Resilience after her teacher tells her to write one. She continues writing to Resilience into adulthood. The end of the book almost made me cry." Caroline, 8, Nebraska

Do you have a book to recommend? Send your review to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

DID YOU KNOW? More than 190 countries around the world participate in Earth Day.

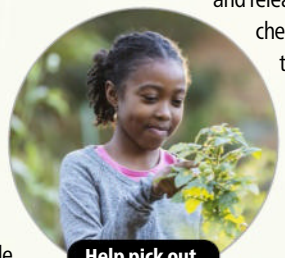
Take action for Earth Day

You can help make a difference in your community with a few meaningful steps.

Earth Day, on April 22, is an opportunity to appreciate our natural world—and to bring attention to major challenges facing the planet. This year the theme is "Our Power, Our Planet." It is intended to raise awareness of sources of renewable energy (energy created by nature that does not run out), like solar and wind power. Here are simple ways you can get involved in Earth Day and encourage others to do the same.

Attend an event

On Earth Day, and in the days leading up to it, people will gather worldwide at special events. Options in your area may include a march or rally to raise awareness of climate change, attending a fashion show that features clothes made of recycled materials, or taking a nature walk. You can visit earthday.org/earth-day-2025 to view a map of events near you.



Help pick out plants to grow.

Start at home

A good way to make a positive impact on the environment is with simple changes to your daily routine. For example, you can reduce the amount of waste you produce by packing your school lunch in a reusable container. You can talk to your family about drinking from reusable bottles instead of buying disposable plastic ones. Repurpose items like glass jars as vases or use them to store craft supplies. Also, recycle as many items as possible, like cans, milk jugs, papers, and cardboard boxes.

Get planting

One way your family can invest in the planet is to plant a tree. Trees help clean the air by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. With an adult's help, you can check with your local public works department to find out if they offer a tree planting program (some provide trees for free). You can also plant a vegetable garden or look into tending a community garden. Gardening provides not only fresh food but a greater connection with nature.

Advocate for change

Earth Day is a great time to speak up for changes to the ways people treat the planet. You can write to a local government official and ask them to support renewable energy efforts in your area, or contact your parks department about making local cleanups a regular part of the community schedule. You can also share with family and friends what you're planning to do in honor of Earth Day—which might inspire them, too. Make your commitment by filling out the form on the next page!

Protect pollinators

Here are three ways to help bees, butterflies, and other pollinators.

Grow native plants Ask a local nursery about the best plants for your area. Plant a colorful garden in a yard or in containers outside.

Avoid poison sprays With your family, learn about pest control tactics that also hurt pollinators. Consider natural alternatives, like repelling mosquitoes with plants like basil and mint.

Offer nesting sites Pollinators favor particular spots for their nests or to lay eggs. For example, some bees dig in the ground to nest. Talk to your family about having varied nesting sites, like shrubs, bare soil, or bee boxes.

GETTY IMAGES

How I'll help the Earth

Use this form to organize your thoughts about ways you and others can protect the planet. Then ask an adult to email it to *hello@theweekjunior.com*. Find extra forms at kids.theweekjunior.com/activities.

First name _____ Age _____ State _____

In honor of Earth Day, how will you pledge to help the planet?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What is your hope for the Earth five years from now?

_____

_____

_____

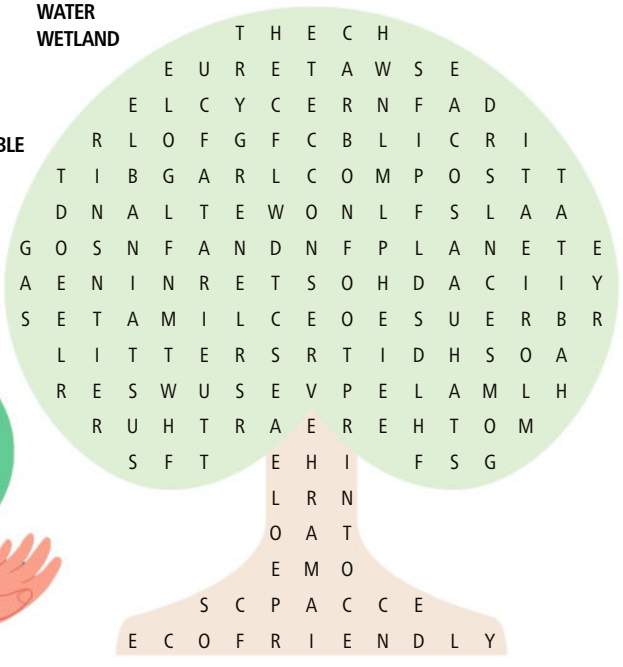
Draw a picture of what taking care of the Earth looks like to you.

By submitting this form, you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending it to us.

Word search

Can you find all these words associated with Earth Day? They are hidden horizontally, vertically, or diagonally and can be forward or backward. When you're done, read the remaining letters to get a bonus message.

BINS
CARBON FOOTPRINT
CLEAN AIR
CLIMATE
COAL
COMPOST
CONSERVE
ECO-FRIENDLY
ENERGY
FLOOD
FUEL
GASES
HABITAT
LITTER
MOTHER EARTH
NATURE
OCEAN
PLANET
RECYCLE
REDUCE
REUSE
SMOG
SOIL
SOLAR
SUSTAINABLE
TIDE
TRASH
TREE
WATER
WETLAND



FILL IN THE BLANKS

Fill in the blanks in each sentence with two words that are the same except for different last letters, like CHAIR and CHAIN.

1. The new restaurant may be fancy and have a famous ____ , but my father said his steak was so tough he could barely ____ it.
2. We just got new carpeting, so we aren't allowed to enter the house _____ we _____ our laces and take off our shoes.
3. Since nobody could come _____ with me, I went to the street fair _____.

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

OFF SIDES

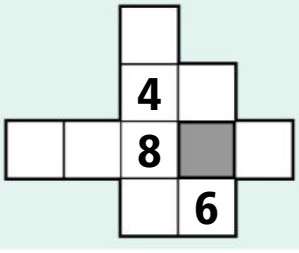
Make three different five-letter words by using the letters given to fill in the blanks.

C G N P S T

_ R E E _
_ R E E _
_ R E E _

Out of order

The numbers 1 to 9 can fit, one per square, so that no two consecutive numbers are in squares that touch in any way, even at a corner. Use the numbers already given to figure out where the rest of the numbers go. (NEED A HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)



Spot the difference

These two pictures of a beach cleanup for Earth Day appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?

PUZZLES BY PUZZABILITY

Out of order hint: A 7 goes in the top box.

Let them eat cake!

The dessert lover's picnic

Tickets sold out in less than a minute when bakers and dessert enthusiasts from across the US got together for the annual Cake Picnic in San Francisco, California. The event had one rule: "No cake, no entry." Attendees brought a total of 1,387 treats, including sponge cakes, Jell-O cake, savory cakes, and even a dinosaur-shaped cake. Once all the treats had been set out on tables, people walked around and chose pieces to taste. One participant said it felt "like a big picnic with a bunch of friends you just don't know yet."

Masterpieces or disasterpieces?

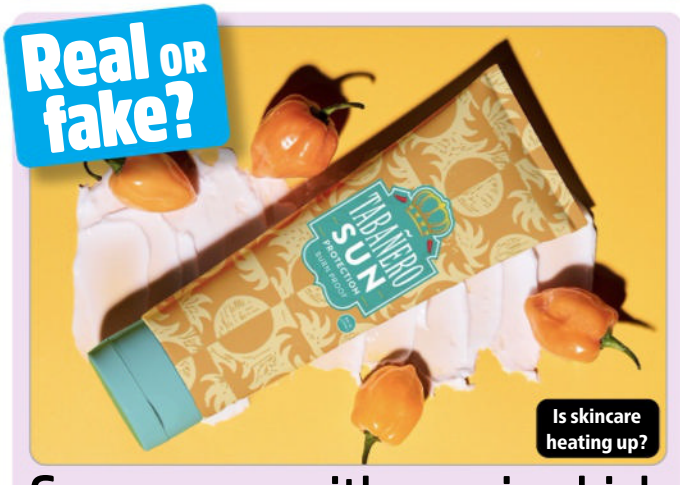
Goofy portraits for a cause

In 2020, Phil Heckels drew a funky portrait of his dog and posted it online, jokingly offering commissions to anyone who'd pay for his questionable talent. To his surprise, real requests poured in. Despite Heckels' protests that his artwork is "rubbish," his depictions of pets with crooked eyes and wacky legs were a hit. Now working under the name Hercule Van Wolfwinkle, the artist has fetched more than $523,000 for charity with his drawings. "The whole project feels like being on a rollercoaster," Heckels said. "It's amazing."

And he's off!

Model-making master retires

A 92-year-old great-grandfather is selling his collection of model vehicles made from recycled objects. For his creations, which include copies of Thomas the Tank Engine and the flying car from the film *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, Vin Wardman used mobility scooters and items like trash cans and pipes. Last time the UK craftsman sold many of his models, he said he "was like a kid without toys and had to start again." But he is finally retiring for good, telling the *Shropshire Star*, "I've decided this is the last now."



Sunscreen with a spicy kick

For those who really want to spice up their summer, the Tabañero hot sauce company has introduced a daring new line of sunscreen. Made with habanero pepper stems, Tabañero Sun Protection is said to defend against the Sun's rays while giving skin a tingly feeling and a zesty fragrance. "Stay hot, not burnt," the company said in a social media post announcing the product. "We've got your taste buds covered—and now your skin, too!" Do you think this story is true, or does it seem light on facts?*

*Fake! The company announced the sunscreen's release on April 1 but later admitted it was an April Fools' joke and doesn't exist. When one commenter wanted to buy a bottle, Tabañero replied, "We love a fearless shopper!"

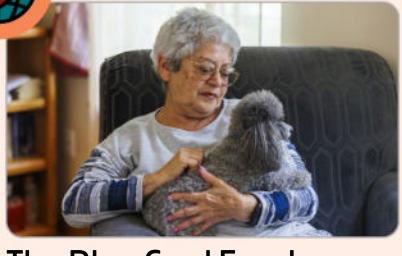
LAURA MORTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES; PHIL HECKELS; ANITA MARIC/SWNS; TABAÑERO; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2)

Editor's note

I have two plants on my desk, and sometimes I read sentences out loud to them while I'm editing a story. If they could talk back, I think they'd be delighted with this week's issue, which is full of content for Earth Day on April 22. Everyone on staff pitched in to create the stories—from good news about clean energy (p2) to a debate about whether or not schools should require climate lessons (p8) to books about the environment (p23). Our cover story is about the new series *The Secret Lives of Penguins* (p20), which will be released in time for Earth Day. Even our puzzles (p26) have an Earth Day theme! Finally, check out some ways you can celebrate Earth Day and fill out a form about helping the planet on pages 24–25. To share your form with us, have an adult email it to *hello@theweekjunior.com*. We may run submissions in future issues. You could also read your form out loud to a plant in your home—or to a tree outside!

Mindy Walker
Executive Editor

CHARITY OF THE WEEK



The Blue Card Fund

This organization works to support survivors of the Holocaust (mass killing of 6 million Jewish people and millions of others by the German Nazi party in the 1930s and 1940s). It offers monthly assistance to help them pay for expenses and provides emergency medical services. It has given more than $40 million in grants and assisted 3,000 households of Holocaust survivors. Find out more at bluecardfund.org.

A bake sale for Los Angeles

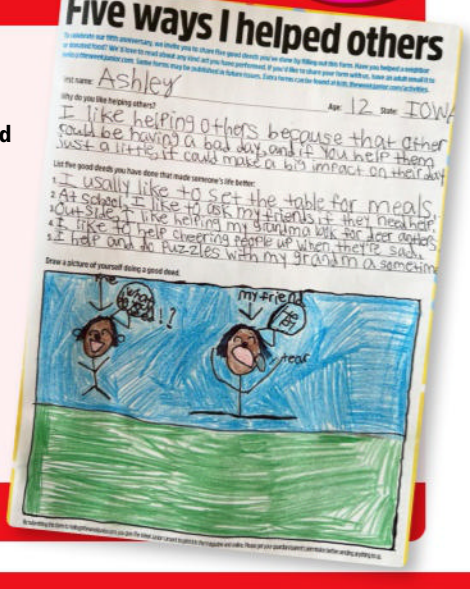
"My friends and I heard about the wildfires in Los Angeles, California, and wanted to do something about it. We thought of holding a bake sale. First, we planned it out and decided what each person would bring or bake. Then, we set up on our street corner and began selling. Our goal was $100 to start, but we raised over $400 in two hours! I am so glad we created awareness about this important cause. We donated all the money to World Central Kitchen, a nonprofit that provides fresh meals to communities going through a crisis."

Have you done something interesting or raised money for a cause you care about? Whatever you're up to, we want to hear about it at *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

RIDDLE OF THE WEEK
What begins and ends with an E but contains only one letter?
Envelope

Your five good deeds

Ashley, a 12-year-old from Iowa, said she likes helping others because it can make their day better. Some good deeds Ashley has done include helping her grandma solve puzzles and cheering people up when they are sad. To mark *The Week Junior*'s fifth anniversary this year, we're asking readers to share five good deeds they've done. Have you helped a neighbor or a friend or performed a kind act? Go to kids.theweekjunior.com/activities to download a form like the one shown at right. Fill it out, then have an adult email it to us at *hello@theweekjunior.com*. We'll feature some of the submissions on this page in future issues.


Five ways I helped others
Ashley
Age: 12 State: IOWA
I like helping others because that other could be having a bad day, and if you help them just a little, it could make a big impact on their day
1. I usually like to set the table for meals
2. At school, I like to ask my friends if they need help
3. Outside, I like helping my grandma with her flower gardens
4. I like to help and do puzzles with my grandma sometimes
5. I help and do cheering people up when they're sad.
Draw a picture of yourself doing a good deed.
my friend
great

THE WEEK Junior IT'S YOUR TURN Email your news, views, and photos to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

Your turn

YOUR PHOTOS

We'd love to see pictures you've taken or pictures with you in them! Have an adult email them to us at *hello@theweekjunior.com*, along with anything you would like us to know about what's happening in the photo.

"I was so excited to celebrate *The Week Junior*'s fifth birthday! I sang and had a cupcake for the special occasion." Genevieve, 10, New Jersey

"We went to a Place of the Week, White Sands National Park, and brought *The Week Junior*." Teddy, 8, and Esme, 5, New Mexico

"*The Week Junior* inspires me to keep learning and be curious. Thank you for featuring Amy from *Jeopardy!*" Nivaan, 9, Washington

Teacher OF THE WEEK

Teacher's Name: **Jasmyn Jordan**

School: **School of Arts and Sciences at The Centre**

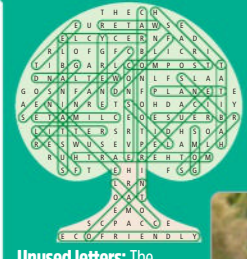
"Ms. Jasmyn always helps me with my math and plays football with us during recess. She takes care of me and my classmates and goes out of her way to help people when they're sad. During our morning meetings, she sometimes lets us play games. She does everything she can to make fourth grade fun. Ms. Jasmyn is the best!"

Stella, 10, Florida

Nominate your teacher for Teacher of the Week!
Send your reason for the nomination, a photo of your teacher, and your school's name and address to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES

Puzzle answers (from page 26)



Off sides
creep
green
trees

Fill in the blanks
1. chef, chew
2. until, untie
3. along, alone

Unused letters: The unofficial flag of Earth Day shows Earth from space.

		7		
		4	2	
5	1	8		9
		3	6	

Quiz answers (from page 30) **1** b) 10 **2** False. Players collect cards. **3** The Blue Angels **4** c) Hydropower **5** False. Lego makes about 400 million tiny tires every year. **6** Carpathia **7** a) New Jersey **8** The Masters **9** True **10** b) Montreal Canadiens **11** *The Last Heir* **12** True **13** Paige Bueckers **14** True **15** a) Cakes

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your first name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.

How much of this week's news can you remember?

1 A male narwhal's tusk can grow up to how many feet long?

a) 5 b) 10 c) 20

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

2 True or false? In the video game Nif Nif, players collect coins.

True ☐ False ☐

3 Lt. Commander Monica Borza is a former flight surgeon for what elite squad of fighter pilots?

4 What was the world's largest source of clean energy in 2024?

a) Solar power b) Wind power

c) Hydropower

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

5 True or false? Lego manufactures about 4 million tiny tires each year.

True ☐ False ☐

6 What is the name of the fictional island where the new film *The Legend of Ochi* is set?

7 Which state was the first to require that public schools teach climate education?

a) New Jersey b) New Mexico

c) New York

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

8 Rory McIlroy recently pulled off a golf Grand Slam by winning what major tournament?

9 True or false? Mice have been found to provide aid to other mice who are unconscious.

True ☐ False ☐

10 Which team holds the record for the most consecutive Stanley Cup wins?

a) Boston Bruins

b) Montreal Canadiens

c) New York Rangers

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

11 In the book *The Liars Society: A Risky Game*, what is the name of the secret club that Weatherby and Jack are trying to get into?

12 True or false? Scientists recently determined that iguanas got to Fiji by traveling 5,000 miles across the ocean from North America.

True ☐ False ☐

13 Who was the number one overall pick in this year's WNBA Draft?

14 True or false? Both the Republican and Democratic nominees for governor in Virginia are women.

True ☐ False ☐

15 What desserts were featured at a giant picnic in San Francisco, California?

a) Cakes

b) Cookies

c) Pies

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

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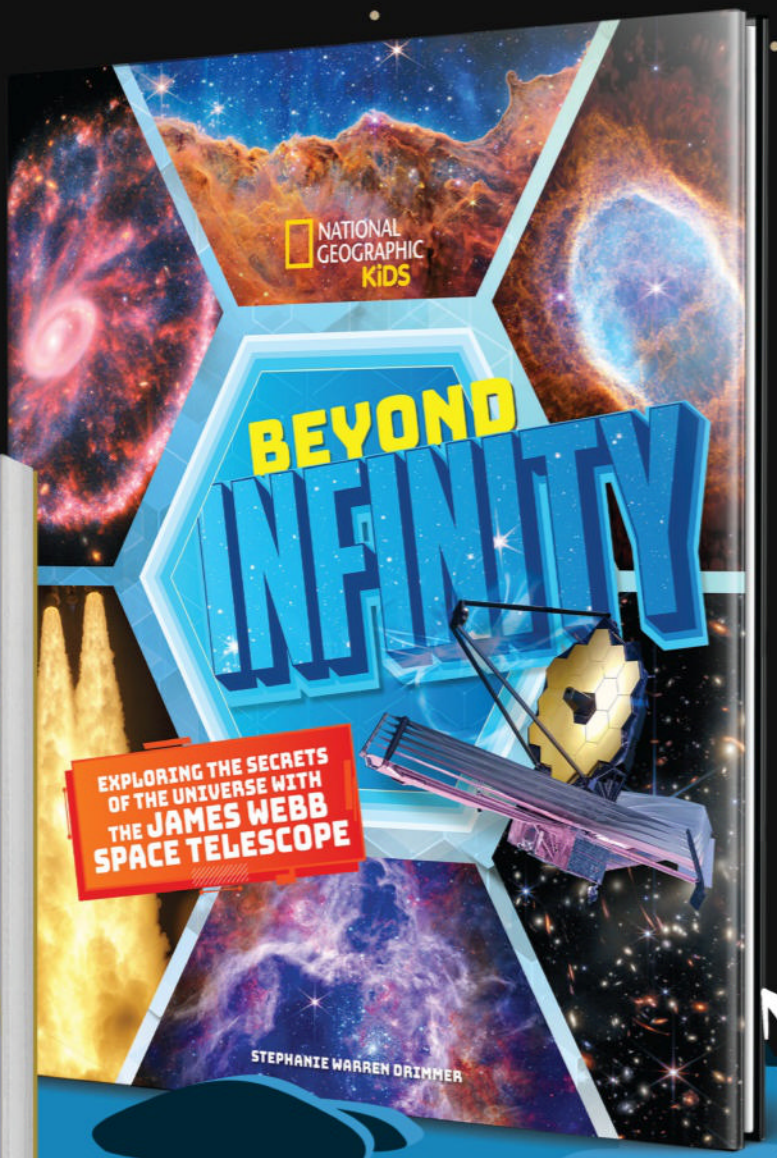
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